

STRATEGIES FOR IMPLEMENTING PROGRAM CHANGES REQUIRED BY EHS

Professional Development

What may be different in child care settings?

- Existing staff may have significantly less formal education
- Professional development is often limited to training hours required by licensing and QRIS systems, rather than having an individualized professional development plan.
- Few days or even hours are set aside for PD.
- After hours training is difficult because program hours are long.
- Few resources are available to provide release time or to pay for training.

Information to Gather and Questions to Consider:

- Individual PD plans: What is the current plan for professional development?
- How many of the current teachers are EHS qualified?
- How does the program track and document teachers' qualifications, experiences and knowledge? Do they document specific teachers' qualifications, experience and knowledge pertinent to working with infants and toddlers and their families?
- How does the program support staff in gaining their educational credentials, e.g., CDA, AA, or BA degrees?
- Does the program partner with local educational agencies to form CDA credentialing and/or college programs that focus on infant/toddler development?
- How will the program ensure that EHS staff members receive training and/or gain coursework that focuses on infant and toddler development and needs?

Goals for transferring Head Start Performance Standards and practices into Child Care Partnerships

- Bring all child care staff to EHS credential requirements (CDA) in first 18 months. Establish a "pathway to quality" around professional development, meeting staff where they are and encouraging the attainment of additional credentials (AA or BA) when possible.
- Implement PD plans and systems to allow child care staff to develop knowledge, skills and experience needed to improve practice over time. Build commitment to ongoing learning, especially in light of the rapid development of the knowledge base in the field.
- Help child care programs build families' understanding of the need for dedicated staff development time.

Strategies for implementing Head Start Performance Standards and practices in child care settings

- Leverage resources and opportunities for Infant/Toddler credentialing that exist in the state.
- Collaborate with local community college or training entity for CDA Training on site or at hub
- Use Head Start resources for training and implementation of professional development
- Engage child care directors as change agents and gatekeepers of quality; this could include providing management, leadership, and finance training
- Offer stipends and CEUs whenever possible, incentivizing trainings with higher rewards for more training (i.e., more money for each session if more sessions are attended).
- Schedule trainings and other PD activities for weekends and evenings, clustered so that commitment is short-term and rewards are timely.
- Work with IL Accelerate program (QRIS) requirements/standards to support professional development
- Include capacity for webinars, incentives, tuition as part of TA budget.

Ratios and Group Size; Continuity of Relationships; Curriculum

What may be different in child care settings?

- Ratios and class size are likely to be at the maximum allowed under state licensing.
- Continuity of relationships may be a new concept, as in most child care centers children change groups and teachers frequently. Teachers may believe that attachment of a child to a particular teacher is not a good idea.
- Child care centers may implement a research-based curriculum, but may still require support in the transition to an intentional and individualized practice.
- Larger class sizes and lower teacher-to-child ratios means that instruction is often in groups, with very little individualization.

Information to Gather and Questions to Consider

- What are the current group sizes? If the group size is larger than 8, is the number of square feet per child sufficient that the space could be divided to accommodate a group of 8 children and one of 4? Or two groups of 8?
- How many infant toddler teachers does the Center currently have? How many meet the EHS qualifications for EHS teachers?
- What is the level of understanding of the importance of attachment to a child's healthy development? What is the program's practice regarding continuity of relationships, especially Primary Caregiving?

- Is a research-based curriculum being used? If so, what is the level of implementation? How many staff have been trained in its use?
- What is the process for developing and implementing curriculum, including lesson plans?

Goals for transferring Head Start Performance Standards and practices into Child Care Partnerships

- Support implementation of EHS ratios and group sizes of 2:8. Provide EHS funding to child care partners as needed to support this transition.
- Support implementation of EHS continuity of relationships model (primary care giving with a limited number of consistent adults). Build staff capacity to establish secure and trusting relationships.
- Provide PD to support the use of research based curriculum accepted by EHS (e.g., Creative Curriculum, HighScope).
- Support child care staff in establishing high quality learning environments and promoting early language, social emotional, math/numeracy, and science skills development and problem solving.
- Build staff capacity, skills and intentionality in setting developmental goals for individual children within the chosen curriculum.

Strategies for implementing Head Start Performance Standards and practices in child care settings

- Work with child care partner to develop a plan for changing class size. This may involve allocating funds to make class size reductions financially feasible and/or making changes in classrooms to support two groups.
- To support continuity of relationships, use training and peer learning groups to increase knowledge and understanding of needs and strengths of individual children and families, and how minimizing transitions and deepening relationships will benefit children and families, in addition to making teaching more rewarding.
- Introduce themes/concepts if not being used; share curriculum planning tools and ideas
- EHS funding could contribute to salaries to increase longevity and attract teacher candidates with more education and experience
- Provide start-up money to go towards enhancing the environment
- Budget funds at start-up for toys and equipment, and for subsequent years as well.

Family Engagement

What may be different in child care settings?

- Since there are few requirements for engaging families and little or no funding for staff to do this work, few child care settings have expertise/experience in this area
- Parents are unlikely to be involved in curriculum planning or in program governance
- Staff may be uncomfortable with the idea of families having input into the program
- Privately owned child care programs may be especially resistant and unaccustomed to having parents participate in decision-making and governance.

Information to Gather and Questions to Consider

- What role do parents play in the program?
- Is there any parent organization or committee?
- Are there regular activities for families? What are they? How frequent?
- Do parents volunteer in the program? In what sorts of ways?
- Do teachers make home visits? If so, how often?
- Are there staff-parents conferences? If so, how often?
- How are parents' ideas for the program solicited?
- Do parents offer ideas for classroom activities?
- What information about families is collected by the program?

Goals for transferring Head Start Performance Standards and practices into Child Care Partnerships

- Establish or strengthen the family support component in the EHS partnership. Implement the PFCE Framework, emphasizing support for the parent-child relationship.
- Provide comprehensive services to EHS eligible children in child care programs. Family support services may be provided by the EHS Grantee "hub" or by staff working on-site at child care sites. Implement family partnership agreements, transition planning, parent education, parent involvement in governance and in classroom planning.
- Build child care program's capacity to engage parents as partners, valuing their knowledge, experience and perspectives.

Strategies for implementing Head Start Performance Standards and practices in child care settings

- Take inventory of anything and everything that the program is already doing with parents. Do this in a collaborative way with child care staff. Demonstrate in what ways EHS requirements are already being met.
- Hold orientation for all parents to introduce EHS and the opportunities and requirements, especially around families and also the use of data. Update or create parent handbook to reflect EHS and the program changes that it brings.
- Update or create parent agreements that reflect EHS opportunities and requirements.
- Assign one Family Support person from grantee who is held accountable for building relationships with Family Support staff at the child care center, and providing coaching and professional development support, regardless of whether serving as supervisor or not. This person assures that parents build an understanding of the role that Family Support plays.
- Provide child care staff with descriptions of comprehensive services that are required and enlist their input on the timetable for introducing services.